

Kentucky School for the Blind

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Department of Education

Parent Resource Center
Jane Shaffer, Parent Consultant, Child Advocate

Dear Commissioners:

I am requesting your help in marching forward to enable the visually challenged people in our country to be able to access television programming in the same way as sighted people. This inaccessibility prevents us and our children from having full life with equal access as our sighted neighbors and friends.

This letter is to let you know that I am speaking from first hand experience for myself and watching my son struggle to view television shows, news programs, etc. When teachers assigned classwork to be watching local or national news in the evening and he couldn't access the materials that was required. When children peers' talk about shows and movies our children should have the same access.

The work of TheatreVision's founder Helen Harris and the hopes of thousands like me should be allowed the same opportunities as sighted individuals in this country.

Please take a minute and try to picture watching your favorite movie or television show and that you were the only one that just saw figures moving on the screen. How would you feel? Would you be able to keep up with the action? Would you know who did what and when?

Please help us by condisering the need for audio description for television programming. I look forward to the day when we can turn on any television or go to see any movie and be equals.

Thank you for your time and help in this matter.

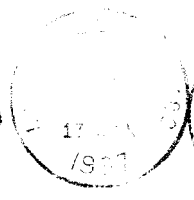
Sincerely,

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MAIL ROOM



JAN 21 1997
Reed Hundt, Chairman

FCC Commissioners

1919 M Street NW, Rm 814

Washington DC 20554

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FOR THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

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January 14, 1997

Reed Hundt

Chairman

FCC

Room 814

1919 M Street NW

Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

We understand that the FCC ruling regarding closed captioning for the hearing impaired is bringing television programming closer to the reality of accessibility than before. We are grateful for this. However, we must march forward in the same way on behalf of the millions (approximately 31 million) visually challenged people in our country who can presently not access television programming in the same way as sighted people. This inaccessibility prevents us and our clients from having a full life with equal access as our sighted neighbors and friends.

This letter is to let you know that as a member of the Advisory Counsel for TheatreVision, we stand together looking forward to recognition of the work of TheatreVision's founder Helen Harris and the great work that now holds such hope and promise for all of our individual communities across the nation. Helen has been able to create a relationship with the motion picture industry and is beginning to provide theater accessibility for motion pictures through TheatreVision's accessibility description technique. TheatreVision also has a great track record in innovative descriptions of television programming. For instance, the American Teacher Awards will air January 23, 1997, with the cooperation of the Walt Disney Company and TheatreVision because of the strenuous persistent efforts and the generosity of the people volunteering their talented voices to the TheatreVision description. The American Teacher Awards will be delivered via radio satellite to the visually challenged on January 23, 1997, at 8:30 PM Los Angeles time via cable, radio and the Keystone satellite. TheatreVision has asked radio stations across the country (1,000 of them) to carry the broadcast into our neighborhoods as well. In the past, the Academy Awards, (three years in a row), The Eyes of Christmas television program and the description of the Paralympics have brought audio-description accessibility available to the blind; however, technology prevents it from being a regular service for the visually challenged.

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MM Docket No. 95-176

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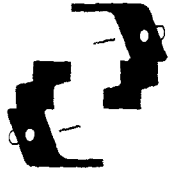
We ask you to strongly consider the need for audio-description for television programming for the blind and visually challenged and to know that we are looking forward to having it on many programs very very soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jules Cote".

Jules Cote
Executive Director

JC:tlf



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37 Elmwood Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

Reed Hundt
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JAN 21 1997

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